

LETTERS  
OF A  
CAPTAIN'S WIFE

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1883 - '84





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[Women at Sea]

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Wednesday.

Pacific Ocean Apr. 2, 1884.

Lat.  $12^{\circ} 13' N$ , Long.  $129^{\circ} 25' E$ .

Dear Lammie, Emma & Dadie,

We are 12 1/2 days from Cardiff, today, & with a good wind not more than 12 or eight days east from Hong Kong, yet we may be ten or twelve days, or even longer before we are in port. However, I am going to begin my letter, to ensure its being ready to read on arrival.

First of all I know you will want to know <sup>HOW</sup> <sup>WE</sup> are and have been, so I will begin with that important subject. The first week Kent & Henry had a bout on his right-hand, which was a serious trial at that time, and from that he has been unusually well, all the passage, but is feeling about worn out now, as he has ridden to, and is very anxious to reach port. (I am disgusted with my blue pen & will resort to pen & ink.)

For myself, I am and have been much better, I know, than you have

fearful since you learned of my condition in Cardiff.

I have hardly been sea sick, at all. The first night out, it was very rough, too rough to sleep at all, and if I raised my head, I felt very squeamish, nothing more. The next day it smoothed down and until the Friday following there was scarcely any motion to the ship, and I was as free from sea sickness as in port. After that we had a few days of more motion and again if I tried to sit up, I was dizzy headed and uncomfortable, but I had none of that headache from which I used to suffer. After the first week or so I was wonderfully clear headed and there was never a day when I didn't take at least a good deal of nothing more, three times, but I believe during the first two or three weeks of the



passage, I never failed to eat - meal -  
once and generally twice every  
day. I lived on mutton chiefly.

As a general thing, in rough  
weather I have had to die more  
than at other times, that was  
all. When I left, I feared the motion  
of the ship would make it very un-  
comfortable for my poor knee, but  
I was happily disappointed. I never  
experienced the slightest difficulty  
in that respect. He seemed to be  
especially favored with smooth  
weather until I was well enough  
to endure the rough.

Two weeks from the day after we sailed,  
(Saturday) I made my first attempt  
to walk. I went from the berth to  
the lounge, with Henry on one side &  
Susan on the other. I took a few  
steps, then hobbled on one foot - the  
last two or three. The next day I  
walked the whole way to the lounge  
and Monday went out on to the  
lounge in the after cabin. That

was a great-jeal-for my almost useless  
feet; but-I accomplished it and  
at night-walked back with the  
aid of Henry and Susan. Thursday  
following I dismissed one attendant  
and substituted a cane. Sunday  
before Christmas, I went to the  
table for the first-time, and a  
few days later began to go on  
deck where I sat-by the hour.  
I steadily improved after that,  
although I didn't dispense with  
the aid of my cane for weeks.

The swelling in the knee went-  
down very slowly, but-it is now  
nearly if not quite gone. I think  
I can perceive a slight-difference  
between it and the other, but not  
enough to be noticeable if not-  
looking for it. I wish it felt-  
as near like the other as it  
looks, but-it doesn't. It is not  
nearly as strong as the other  
and I can't bend it like  
the other. I can bend it-suffi-  
ciently for walking, but-I can't use



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it in other respects like the other.  
If I want to look at anything on  
the floor, or open a drawer near  
the floor, I must sit flat on  
the floor first, and then it is  
not easy to get up again. In so  
many ways I find the inconveni-  
ence of it. I think I never half real-  
ized the use of joints, until mine  
became so useless, comparatively.

However, I am very thankful it is so  
well as it is, and will be well  
satisfied if it will always keep  
as well, yet I am not at all  
supercilious of its sometime recover-  
ing its former state.

As my knee improved so also did  
my strength. I eat well and slept  
well. Indeed the first half of  
the passage I slept better than  
I have for years, so soundly night  
after night that I wouldn't know  
when Henry went on deck, an unknown  
occurrence in my former sea going.  
I presume I was making up for

lost sleep in Cardiff.

About two months since Henry remarked one day that he believed I was better than I was at home and I was remarkably well for a while. I had no headache at all, and very little neuralgic trouble except in the right knee and leg. It seemed as if all my old troubles had centered there, but the past six or eight weeks, my troubles are scattering over me again, I think, but chiefly with my stomach. I will feel very well for a week or two and be able to eat any reasonable diet, then all of a sudden my stomach will rebel and I will have to live on gruel, corn starch, tapioca and "rice", sometimes, for two or three days or even more.

I have never had one of those severe attacks that I used to



have, but it is of the same nature  
and comes on just as suddenly.  
I had the worst attack last Saturday  
night - I have had since I left home  
and I took morphine then, the  
first time since, I left Cardiff.  
In consequence I was sick to my  
stomach next day and generally  
good for nothing, so I lay in bed  
all day, the first day I have  
been able to break fast since I first  
went to the table. My stomach  
isn't right yet, although I am  
eating meat again. I had had  
a broiled chicken (a small one)  
for my breakfast, this morning.

I eat flesh just while sick  
in Cardiff, but I don't think I lost  
it all, after we left - and I have  
gained now, much that I lost.  
Susan believes thoroughly in feeding  
invalids and she brought the  
food to me from the first; when-  
ever she thought best and then  
insisted on my eating it, and

I have concluded it was a good thing. Sometimes, I would think it would best to eat so often so much, but I don't think I am any the worse for it. Every morning <sup>five</sup> when Henry has his coffee, I have a cup of oat-meal gruel, with milk in it. Susan insisted on bringing it until I fell into the habit of taking it without resistance. The cook makes the nicest gruel I ever ate. It is always strained, and if it was it for the sweetened milk, I should like it very much, but I can't learn to like that. Though I always take it. Everything is well cooked and the cook and her wife both have become so used to making extras for the Captain's family. I think that they expect to do it. He is very nice about every thing much more particular than she in little things, and every thing he cooks



As one is sent in so fast and  
 as K. & Co. vice I can't help eating  
 it. She seems to enjoy waiting  
 on the Captain's wife, I think  
 and nursing them, so I haven't  
 lacked ~~for~~ attention.

I have knitted for myself, three pairs of  
 woollen stockings and footed four  
 pairs for Henry, besides toeing two  
 or three pairs and knitting two pairs  
 of wristers. I have made two all wool  
 flannels for myself and am mending  
 them. I cut and partly made a  
 sack, out of that black & white cambric  
 I brought from home for that purpose,  
 weeks ago, then rough weather inter-  
 fered with my finishing, and when  
 I could sew again there was so  
 much darning and repairing to  
 do, I haven't touched it since.

I have nearly finished the  
 mending now, and should have  
 had it all done and my back,  
 too, if my stomach had behaved  
 properly, the last two weeks.

The first two weeks after I left my  
room, I was the calico wrapper, I  
bought at Huntington, lying on the  
lounge then most of the time.  
Since that I have worn very  
black & annel skirt with calico  
socks all the time. I wore woven  
stockings until about three weeks  
ago, when it was so hot I was  
obliged to put on cotton, but I wear  
a flannel bandage round my  
knee, all the time, and I wear  
my woven drawers yet.

I don't believe my face and  
hands were ever burned so brown  
before in my life, as now. I have  
been on deck so much the past  
four weeks. I have sat under the  
awning and worn my broad brim-  
med hat, with a lap robe in  
made of a large white handkerchief  
yet the hot air fairly seared.  
My hands I couldn't protect  
when sewing, so they are brown  
and freckled.



I think now, I have devoted quite sufficient-time and space to the important-Egg and I will change the subject—

I will tell you all the vessels we spoke, with the hope of being reported. Three we requested to report-as "all well", the others we only set our signal letters to, as there was no opportunity for more. I hope they didn't fail to report-us, and I that you did not fail to see the report.

The first was Dec. 20. 7<sup>h</sup>. 27<sup>h</sup>.  
A Steamer — Next Dec. 24, a bark bound to Gibraltar from Java.  
3<sup>h</sup>-30<sup>h</sup> 27<sup>h</sup> 10<sup>h</sup> hr. Then a bark for New Zealand Dec. 25- 2<sup>h</sup>-36<sup>h</sup>.  
27<sup>h</sup>-13<sup>h</sup> hr. Dec. 29 a Bark for St-Catherine Is. 5<sup>h</sup> 20<sup>h</sup> S- 32<sup>h</sup> 10<sup>h</sup> hr.  
Jan. 8 Ship for Melbourne 23<sup>h</sup>-30<sup>h</sup> S.  
31<sup>h</sup>-30<sup>h</sup> hr. Jan. 10 Bark for Van Diemen Land 26<sup>h</sup>-11<sup>h</sup> S. 27<sup>h</sup> 45<sup>h</sup> hr. Six in all.

Henry says he never remembers seeing so many vessels in the one passage as we saw

the first of this. One day south  
of the line there were ten or  
twelve in sight at once.

When I finished my letter in  
the channel, the wind wasn't  
very favorable, and I was afraid  
we might have a long time in  
the channel, but before the pilot  
left, about ten o'clock, the wind  
veered sufficiently for us to lay  
our course, and we had a  
good run and fair wind from  
that time until we took the  
"Yacobs". That first night was  
nasty enough, thick raining,  
blow, and rough, but the next  
day all sail was set, and for  
the next sixty days not even  
the Royals were taken in ex-  
cept once for a few hours, when  
it was a little squally.

I don't mean that the sea  
was smooth all that time  
for it wasn't. Much of the  
time, especially south of the  
"line", we had a heavy sea,



rolling the ship terribly, a sea  
which the wind we had did not  
warrant, at all. The whole  
passage thus far, whenever we  
have had rough weather, the sea  
has seemed worse than could be  
expected from the wind.

We have had no heavy gale,  
yet a good deal of uncomfortable  
weather, after we passed  
past the Cape. For a week  
before we turned to the North  
ward, it blew half a gale, all  
the time, with a ferried sea  
much of the time. After we  
got into 30° South we supposed  
we should have only smooth  
sea, comparatively, and nice  
weather, (43° was the farthest South  
we went) - Instead of that we  
had about the worst weather  
of the passage. We had but  
few days of real comfortable  
weather, until the day after  
we made Sandalwood Island

in  $3^{\circ}$  south &  $120^{\circ}$  E., four weeks  
ago. You see by that, we didn't  
go around Australia. Henry  
concluded to try the route  
among the islands, and I feel  
sure he has shortened the  
passage, considerably by it, but  
it has caused him much  
more anxiety, no doubt.

These past four weeks has been  
an anxious time for him,  
and I think he is completely  
worn out. I never heard  
him complain so much of  
being tired, in our life.  
We have been out of sight of land  
now for six days, but before  
that, twenty four hours was  
the longest without land  
in one or more directions  
after making Sandalwood.  
and as calms & light-  
baffling winds was the  
regular accompaniment  
varied occasionally with

strong head wind, you can  
imagine how much rest  
Henry got. He neither ate  
nor slept. There was one  
whole week, he was hardly  
off the deck, or off his  
feet - day or night.

I will tell you our route, then  
you can trace it on the map if  
you choose. We have given the  
position of Samarwood. Passing  
that, we entered Amboy Passage  
between Amboy and Timor,  
out of that passage into Flores  
Sea, then the Banda Sea, passing  
to the East of Borneo through  
Mamupa Strait into Pitt's Passage  
then by Gase' island into Gilolo  
Passage. There the wind was  
very ungracious. First we  
tried to pass Gely Island  
on the <sup>EAST</sup> side, but couldn't  
and after beating two days  
passed on the West side be-  
tween Gely and Halmakeira



and out into the Pacific be-  
tween Ssang and Nyang.  
Since entering the Pacific,  
a week ago Sunday, we have  
made Merir, Anu, and  
the Sansoral islands, they  
not wanting to make any  
of them. But the wind  
and current conspired to  
make us run within four  
to ten miles of them all.

We saw no inhabitants on any of the  
islands, except a few on the beach  
of Amblan, a little island south  
of Borro, until we came to Ssang  
a week ago Sunday. We were  
all disappointed that we had  
to pass so far from the  
inhabited portions for any of  
the natives to come off to the  
ship, as the Howard and his  
wife had told us that was  
where the boats came off with  
fruit shells &c, when they  
went this way with Capt. Howard

As that was the last island of much  
size we needed pass, we had no  
thought of seeing any more after that  
but we were all ready to cry enough  
enough, before the last tribe vis-  
ited us. We passed Syang, a week  
ago Sunday morning. A boat-  
man out took a small boat was  
discovered coming towards us  
from the island, and soon after  
a second. They were soon along  
side - Later two more started  
from shore, but the breeze had  
freshened so much, they couldn't  
catch us, and they turned  
back. The two alongside con-  
tained each five natives, dark  
enough to be called "Darkies" yet not  
real black, with black curly hair  
some wearing it cut short, others  
long, and tied on the back of the  
head, standing out like a bunch  
of brush. They had flattened noses  
but not thick lips. There was  
a little boy in one boat & two in

the other. Some of the men had  
beards, others were smooth faced.  
They were clad in bracelets, neck-  
laces and earrings, with a small  
piece of cloth around the loins,  
except the boys, who wore minus  
the cloth. They could all  
say "Knife" and "tobac", but  
that was the limit of their  
knowledge of Eng. apparently.  
There were articles seemed  
the most desirable to them  
of anything, but they would  
take most anything that was  
offered. They brought no fruit  
except a few green coconuts,  
but their treasures consisted  
of shells, red coral, tortoise  
shell and mats made of some  
kind of palm leaf.  
European fore and aft. traded with  
them, so the first boat was  
cleared entirely, but before the  
second boat could dispose of  
much, both boats were obliged



to leave, as the wind was carry-  
ing us fast by their island.  
Kemm furnished them with shirt  
and pants, with which they seemed  
much pleased, as they also did  
with the broad tobacco knife,  
bright handkerchiefs &c which  
they used. They manifested no  
disposition to come on board.  
Their boats were long canoes,  
with bamboo outriggers on each  
side, extending five or six feet.  
They had bamboo about four inches  
in diameter and three or four feet  
long for water buckets. We gave  
them a bucket of water and  
they turned it into them.

Their call was a pleasant  
diversion, and entertained us  
very much. The following morn-  
ing we made Moris so early  
and a little later Ana Is. Before  
noon two boats from the former and  
three from Ana were alongside.  
Two more from Moris were unable

to reach us. There were over thirty  
men in the five boats and nearly  
all of them came on deck. They  
were much the same in ap-  
pearance as those from Syang, only  
more hideous looking, as most  
of them were tattooed, and their  
faces daubed with yellow paint.  
Their ears were not simply pierced  
but had holes in them large  
enough to put the end of my little  
finger in. That isn't an exaggeration  
at all. They had a variety of decora-  
tions for their ears but most of them  
had bunches of dried grass and  
flowers in them. Some of it  
hanging nearly to their shoulders.  
Their hair wearing was beautiful  
even than the Syangites.

Their catamarans were canoes  
with outriggers on one side only.  
We have a miniature one bought  
of them. They brought green  
coconuts, mals, shells, and lines  
of various sizes, from the smallest fish

lines to a good sized clothes line.  
They are strong well made lines from  
some kind of vegetable fibre.  
Kear furnished every one of them with  
a shirt and pair of pants and told  
them to put them on. Some did  
so, or I should say nearly all did so,  
but some the bright way. Others  
put shirt and pants both over  
their shoulders tying the former by  
their sleeves the latter by their  
legs under their arm.

It was amusing to see the  
nate and some of the sailors  
teaching them how to "get in" to  
their clothes, and assisting  
them. They were here until  
nearly three P.M. when a squall  
coming up, they were obliged to  
leave much to our relief. It  
was just three when we sat down  
to dinner as there was no  
chance to eat before that. We kept  
the cabins shut up, even the  
shutters closed, to make sure



that none of them should enter, not knowing our danger. Their principle of humanity was developed.

The noise and confusion was terrible. I came down into the cabin two or three times to escape it, but couldn't stop long, it was so smothering with the doors closed.

That night, we all hoped earnestly that the wind would favor us sufficiently to escape the Samoral Is., which was the last group (two very small ones) likely to bother us. They were north of us at dark, and we hoped to go enough West of north to clear them, and also hoped to pass in the night, but in neither respect were our hopes realized. The wind was very light and the opposing current strong, consequently in the morning we made the islands and not long after ten boats

were seen approaching.  
He managed to get some dinner before  
the first ones arrived and soon after  
they were all here, "en masse".  
He wanted them to remain in  
their boats, but they came over  
the side like so many rats.  
The boats contained from five  
to ten men each. One straggler  
that came late in the afternoon  
after all the rest were gone  
had only three men. Henry  
judged that boat to be about  
sixteen feet long and fourteen  
inches wide and they had  
come at least ten miles,  
for "tobac". They all seemed  
crazy for tobacco yet, seemed  
delighted with the hard bread  
and other things. Everyone  
had at least one small piece  
of tobacco, and they all had  
bread. Then the sailors traded  
off clothes knives and all sorts  
of things. Henry gave them

fish hooks and various little  
things which he thought would  
be useful. They brought quantities  
of sponges, the first that had  
been brought off. They had  
also shells & lims, and male  
and a few chickens, very  
small, no boat-bringing more  
than one. They also had some  
live turtles. We have four  
on board now, one not much  
larger than we tried to see  
down to the pond, the other  
more than a foot-long.  
They all, the natives I mean,  
left about two P.M. and  
it was such a relief, the  
impatience had been so great.  
We sighed for a good breeze  
that night, but the wind  
was very light and at-  
night died out entirely,  
while the current was drift-  
ing us nearer the islands.  
In the morning instead of



7  
being ten or twelve miles away  
they were only about five, and  
sixteen boats came off to us.  
Breakfast had to be hurried up  
for and left, in order to get  
through before they were along side.  
I counted sixty nine men in the  
first eight boats and then they  
came too fast, I couldn't count  
any more.

I forgot to say that in the  
party of the day before was one, who  
could speak a little Eng, and had  
been away from the island once  
in a ship, he said, who begged  
so hard to go in the ship to  
Hong Kong that Henry consented  
to take him. Another tried to  
stay away and go with us, but  
we was thought to be sufficient  
when the red were gone, he was  
supplied with shirt and pants  
and told to put them on.  
He was going to sit down by the  
cabin door & direct himself of

and little he had on, preparing  
to redressing, but the steward  
told him to go forward and  
sent one of the boys to assist  
him. When dressed he was  
set to work washing shells &c.  
Two centipedes and plenty of  
ants had been found among  
the other lots. He found one  
more centipede.  
When the sixteen boats were  
even coming, the next morning  
"our native" (he says his name  
is "Mary", probably not spelled  
that way) was made to under-  
stand that he was to tell  
each boat-load not to come  
on deck. If they did they  
would receive nothing, but if  
they remained in their  
boats they should have "plenty".  
He did as directed with  
the first boat, and it worked  
admirably. He took what  
they had gave them what they

wanted, and told them to go  
which they did, but then they  
began to become thick and  
fast, until there were twelve  
or fourteen here together and  
then, they began to come on  
board. "Mary", the Captain's mate,  
and even the sailors, & the  
Steward of course, did their best  
to impress them with the idea that  
they must remain in their boats,  
but all to no purpose. The ducks  
quack & swarmed with them.

Sarkai asked the Captain to take  
them in the ship, and one family  
insisted upon it, sitting down  
the duck, when the mate told  
him to go in his boat, as if he  
intended to remain, whether wanted  
or not. They all seemed very  
kindly disposed towards us and ap-  
parently delighted with the treat-  
ment received, repeating of late  
"very good ship", "very good"  
"Capitaine" &c, but abusing them



elms and towards each other  
they were savage enough at  
slight-provocation. They would  
quarrel over the tobacco and bread  
but chiefly the former, until  
I was fairly afraid, sometimes,  
of serious tumults. They all  
seemed fairly crazy for tobacco  
and it is a constant wonder  
to me where or how they  
first acquired the taste.

The Howard asked "Mary" how  
his people sell about his leav-  
ing them - he answered,  
"Fadder, Mudder wise, plenty  
tears, he tell them they  
want smoke". Love of home  
and people with kind may be  
strong, but evidently love of  
tobacco is stronger. He  
seems as happy as a King.  
He has had a trunk made in  
one end of the soil room and  
he told Henry he had bette-  
red than the King, as the  
King had only a small.

Fortunately for us, the wind freshened  
 soon after the boats reached us,  
 and we were leaving the island  
 in fact. Our sail had to leave  
 before eleven o'clock and we  
 were not sorry to say good  
 bye. There must have been near  
 one hundred and forty men in  
 the sixteen boats, and they with  
 those of the other three ships made  
 about two hundred thirty natives  
 entertained by us, in one week.  
 The last morning, one whole  
 cask of bread was given out.  
 We have at least a barrel of shells  
 such as they are, and sponges  
 enough to use for paint cleaning  
 or anything else. If the ship  
 goes to New York we shall be  
 able to get our treasures home,  
 but they would be worth bar-  
 tering from a foreign port.  
 We have a lot of pumice  
 stone picked up, since we  
 have been coming the islands.

The steward rigged a net with which he used to catch the treasures of the deep as they floated by. He caught some of the fish, and different kinds of mussels, but the pumice stone was most abundant. There were without exaggeration acres of it floated by, much of it very fine, and when fine, it had a yellow tinge, resembling saw dust in the water, but all the larger pieces had the usual gray color. It was in all sizes from the smallest pebble, to pieces as large as your head.

We passed two active volcanoes, from one of which I saw the smoke rising.

I wanted to see one in the night, but had no opportunity.

The weather was extremely hot, while we were among the islands. It has been much



cooler since entering the Pacific.  
We made Sandarford Island  
on the ninty seventh day from  
Cardiff, and we entered the  
Pacific just seventeen days later  
that was six weeks ago yesterday.  
Today, Monday April 7, we  
are in the China Sea, entered  
it last night, by Ballintang  
Channel. We made Ballintang  
and Babuyan islands, yesterday  
noon, and passed them before  
dark. This noon we were about  
three hundred and fifty miles  
from Hong Kong, and we ought  
to be there by Thursday, at the  
latest - if the wind continues,  
but we may be becalmed or  
headed off by the wind and  
kept out days longer, but we are  
all hoping for a speedy arrival,  
now, work has been driving today,  
everything being made ready for  
put. It has been scraping and  
cleaning and painting for a long

time, so only the finishing up  
remains to be done. They are  
ricing the decks, this afternoon,  
the "special thing" I always  
dread, at sea. My nose has  
been elevated ever since they  
began. Last week, the ship  
was painted outside.

The Steward and his wife com-  
menced their scrubbing and  
cleaning, last week. She is  
washing today, and he is  
cleaning the galley. He is  
very neat and the galley al-  
ways looks nice enough to eat  
from any part of it. He is  
by far the best Steward I have  
ever known Henry to have.

I began this last Wed.  
Thursday, it was so rough I could not  
write at all. The sea about a dozen  
miles long, but a terrible heavy  
sea, the worst head sea with  
one exception in the last week.  
When she hit her bows under

once, she filled the fore-castle up to  
 the lower benches, & after to the <sup>gun</sup> ~~gun~~  
 piece of the sailors who were taking  
 their forenoon nap, during their water  
 below. I lay on the lounge most all  
 day. I think I should have been sea-  
 sick if I had kept about. The  
 cabin boy was sick, and one of the  
 sailors - a green hand this voyage.  
 They were both very sick, the  
 first of the passage. It seemed a  
 great deal worse to have such a  
 sea, after the weeks of almost un-  
 interrupted smooth water we have  
 had. That bad sea went down  
 during the night, but we have  
 had a strong breeze most of the  
 time since, and considerable  
 motion to the ship, until today  
 & other since nine or ten o'clock  
 last night, since which it has  
 been very smooth again.  
 It is beautiful weather now,  
 and as the moon is near  
 the full, the evenings are



perfect.

Now, for Sadie's special benefit, I am going to give an account of our animals, and I will begin with the cats. I quote you, I believe, from Cardiff that we had three.

The white one, we named "Julia Brad" and call her for short, "Julie". The Knavs her name, and answers to it readily. She is old, I think, and very irritable, but she is very special pet. She is a good catter and that kind of game has been very abundant, all the passage. When I was sick in bed, she used to come as regularly as my food was brought, and jump on the bed to share my meals and since I've gone to the lair, she always sits on the floor at my left, and if I don't feed her fast enough, she

reaches up, and pulls my sleeve with her claws. She never goes to anyone else and always leaves the stable when I do. She had the habit, the first of the passage of bringing every rat she caught in the night into our room, and upon to the bed. Two nights, I was awakened by putting my hand on a half eaten rat on my pillow. After being whipped two or three times for it she dropped the habit.

The gray cat is young and very playful, though larger than Julia. Susan called her "Thomas William", but after a while it was considered very inappropriate, so I changed it to *Thomasina Wilhelmina*. She is called sometimes by her first name in full, but more generally, "Tommy", though the mate always calls her "Johnie". She is everyone's pet. Julia is very

aristocratic, and stops in the after  
cabin and on the after deck when  
going to any one but Harry or me,  
to be petted, since Thompson  
is usually at home in the  
cabin or fore-castle, and even  
me, for food aft, but at  
feeds her. At the table she  
sits on the collar between Harry  
and me and she feeds her.  
But if she doesn't get it  
she wants she remains to  
the second table. She catches  
more rats even than Julia.  
She has two almost every  
night now. She is as full  
of mischief as a child, and gets  
fairly wild sometimes. My work  
box is, or was, a cigar box, and  
she will open it with her paws  
and take things out with her  
mouth, and carry off. I found  
her one day coming in from  
the forward cabin with my  
thumb in her mouth.

She seemed like very much to play with Julia, and frequently attempted it, but Julia in her dignity frowned upon such frivolity and the result of such attempts, usually is a mutual cuffing, & putting in a good time quite tolerable to witnesses.

Of our third cat "Martina White", I have but little to write. He was very mischievous and so very uncleanly in his habits, that he was let overboard one day, not many weeks after we sailed. His tone seemed to fool every one about it but me, and I knew nothing of it until some time after he disappeared beneath the water.

You remember we had two bigons, when we left port. The second Sunday out, the one that came from San Francisco in the ship, was not to be found nor has he been seen since.



He no doubt felt a victim to  
Yorrmyn's ruthless claws, as  
that is her great failing. She  
isn't willing that anything of  
the bird kind shall live  
if she can prevent it. There  
is scarcely a star now, but  
she says I'm smit - for the  
one dove pigeon left, but then  
far, dovey has escaped her  
clutches, and seems as con-  
tented and happy with the  
ions, as if she belonged to them.  
She roosts with them night  
and calls with them, but  
when she wants anything  
more she goes into the galley  
and helps herself, tasting  
everything she finds where the  
steward allows her. She makes  
him know when she wants a  
bath, and he gives her a pan  
of water, and after bathing  
if it is cool she will lie  
down by the galley stove, to dry.

The comes into the cabin oc-  
casionally, but we don't encourage  
it for fear of Tummy.

"Duck" the canary, is well  
and happy. He soon learns a  
note for weeks after we sailed  
and we thought he remembered  
ring, but he finally began to  
sing up a very little, and the  
past few weeks, since he has  
been hung on deck he sings a  
good deal. Tummy always  
saps her mouth when she hears  
him sing, as if she already  
started then good he was.

Our hens have multiplied from  
two dozen to four or five. They  
have furnished but ten four eggs  
not more than two dozen in  
all, but we have had "Chicken"  
dinner, every Sunday since we  
left port. I think the chicks  
we got of the natives is one  
little red "Cranbilly", that  
has been trained to fight, probably

Then it is on clock, it will  
chase one over that gets by  
it, and fly as high as the  
mail sometimes, trying to  
stick in his spurs. Then  
there is another little one  
black chickie, that chirps all  
the time unless I come one for  
it. The carpenter and Mares  
the son, that sleeps in his room  
have taken charge of it. Right  
it sleeps with which one hap-  
pens to be in. When the carpen-  
ter is on clock it sleeps with  
Mares, and when Mares is on  
clock, with the carpenter. They  
each have a piece of canvas  
in their berth for the chickie  
to lie on. The other day  
Mares was walking about the  
clock, with the chickie inside  
his shirt, and a coconut-  
shell with food in it from  
which the chick was eating.  
When Mares was in his meals,

1  
Sometimes the chicken eats from  
his dish. Henry brought it in  
to me the other day, when I  
was lying on the lounge, and  
it ran down as contented as  
if it had been brought up  
there. Three of the chickens  
the natives brought down over  
board.

Of our four pigs, we have  
now, three. The other one fur-  
nished several fresh meals for  
us about mid passage.

I think I wrote you from Cardiff  
that the two Hesperides died.  
We have no other rats now  
except the four which I saw  
coming in into two on deck.  
The steward thinks he can  
sell them to the Chinese when  
we get in. I am beginning  
to feel sorry for our cats,  
as the Chinese men steal them  
to eat. The natives from one  
of the islands wanted Julia



very common. I thought given  
their appearance they had  
never seen a cat-before. Both  
cats seemed frightened when  
the natives were on board and  
kept down in the cabin every  
time, except that one that  
Jolia went on deck, and then  
she ran hid under the  
wheel cover.

We have seen very  
few birds this passage.  
Down in the South ~~Pacific~~ <sup>Pitcairnie</sup>  
there were some Albatrosses  
and Gannets, that I fed  
with grease, but not nearly  
so many as the other time  
I came this way. I didn't  
see one Cape Pigeon. It  
was the hatching season,  
and they were probably  
all on shore.

I have seen flying fish  
in abundance, and eaten  
some. Sometimes in large

weather, one would wash one  
ward and sometimes lay over  
the rail, and when that  
happened the blunard always  
cooked it for me. The natives  
brought four or five large ones,  
and we had them for supper.

There was a tiny little one  
washed on deck by a sea, one  
day, not more than an inch  
long. It was prettier than  
a gold fish.

Several times, within the  
past three or four weeks, we  
have seen large logs floating  
in the water with from four  
to eight birds sitting content-  
edly on top, looking at a  
distance like boats, with men  
in them. Isn't it an eerie  
going counter where even the  
birds go to sea as a log, and  
eat the barnacles, as they float  
along? —————

May, Henry

Friday, Apr. 11, 1854.

I left my work suddenly,  
Monday for the paper, expecting  
to resume next-day, but  
next-day, we had a strong  
wind and heavy sea,  
making it impossible to write.  
I did not try to do anything,  
but lay on the sofa with  
all day with one hand ready  
to hold on, every few minutes.  
The sea came over in all  
directions and every one  
on deck was thoroughly  
drenched. It was so  
thick and dirty. The sea  
abated some before night,  
and was very smooth  
by daylight in the morning,  
but the wind held strong,  
and from noon until 1 A.M.  
we averaged ten knots an  
hour, and after that about  
seven until we were close  
in. It was very thick

all night, which was most-unfortunate as near-land and Kepl-Heny very anxious about-eleven at-night he fell in with Chinese fishing boats which were numerous from there on. Just before 4 1/2 m. a pilot-boat was seen, and we hove to for him, and he was soon on board. He was a Chinaman and had his wife and children in the boat. As soon as he was on board he asked for a piece of beef and some bread for his family.

It was fairly pitiful to see those little children when they saw the bread and meat-lowered into their boat. They laughed and clapped their hands as if such food was seldom



seen. As soon as they had it, their boat left, and we proceeded, and at 2 P.M. dropped anchor in Hong Kong harbor, about a mile from the shore. 131 days from Cardiff.

Before the anchor was down, the decks began to swarm with Chinamen, representing every kind of trade - watchmen, sailors, bum boat-men, portrait painters, shoe-makers, newspaper agents and I don't know who all. It was the butcher, the baker, the candlestick maker, and everyone else. Soon after anchoring Capt. Eaton of the American ship Kenosha made a call.

Henry was going ashore at once, but I craved him

to wait until morning, for  
he had been on deck con-  
stantly since Tuesday morning  
not even coming to his meals  
and his back pained him  
terribly. So he consented  
to my plan, and sent  
to the Consul for our  
letters, and I wrote a  
telegram to be sent.  
That failed to go that  
night, owing to some  
misunderstanding and  
Henry attended to it in  
the morning. I hope it  
went through promptly &  
that Mr. Rogers notified  
you at once.

I felt very nervous about  
the letters, not knowing  
what they might contain  
but, oh, I can't tell you  
what a relief, I expe-

I need after reading that all  
were well. When I saw your  
little letter Laddie, I felt so  
light and happy. All that  
~~evening~~ I felt like singing "O  
my heart says Praise the Lord"

There were two letters from  
you, Laddie, the first - long  
one and then one dated  
Feb. 21<sup>st</sup> - one from Eugene  
one from a lady in Cardiff  
and one from Mrs. Gurney  
a fellow passenger in the  
Bothnia.

I have no room to make much  
allusion to what your letter  
contained, but you, I can  
understand, that every line  
was read & reread eagerly,  
while I was so rejoiced to  
learn you were all well, at  
home, there was much that  
was so sad

You didn't write when Bradley  
Leonard died, but I presume

13 Soon after your last letter  
to Cardiff. What I expected to  
hear, also Warren Brooks's death  
but Mrs. & Emma's & Mrs. Farnham's  
were very unexpected.

Laura's death's desolation seems  
too terrible to be true. It still  
haunts me. I couldn't feel  
sorry now, to hear that she  
could all the rest were gone,  
for life must seem too terrible  
to endure. But God knows  
best.

When Henry came from  
there, yesterday, he brought ten  
packages of papers eight from  
home and two from Legum.  
I needn't say they were wel-  
come. I wrote Emma that  
you tried mail of them upon  
you made a nice thing of it.  
I wound the cotton up as  
I took it off and have quite  
a ball. I have looked at  
none but the Bath papers yet.



and only the general news  
in them. I will skim them  
through, and put by for care-  
ful reading in the future.

Henry & the boys get to hardly  
glance at them, but I meas-  
ure the items until he comes  
from shore and then re-  
count.

I learned by the paper  
the pilot brought on board  
Wednesday morning, that  
the San Francisco mail  
doesn't leave until next  
Friday <sup>18<sup>th</sup></sup> and the Eng. mail  
Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> so it was no  
use to send my letter  
off. I am very sorry it  
will keep you waiting so  
long. I was more fortu-  
nate, as the San Francisco  
mail arrived the day before  
we did, so you see it was

just in time.

I know via San Francisco  
is the quicker route so I will  
send this that way, by the  
"Oceanic" and I am go-  
ing to write another and  
send by the Eng. boat.

I am so sorry the mails  
are so infrequent, it is so  
tedious waiting - Two of the  
mail boats have been  
taken off this year.

However, I will send by every  
boat while here. I presume  
you know our destination  
long ere this, but we don't  
there were no letters for  
Henry from Mr. Rogers, but  
this morn, he rec'd a note  
from a man on shore, stating  
he had rec'd telegram from  
parties in New York, sent by  
request of Mr. Rogers, all-

...  
naming that the ship was  
chartered. Henry went ashore  
immediately. I hope we shall  
know soon, where ~~to~~ and  
what-for, we are chartered.

I will close this  
letter up now, ready  
for next Friday and  
write the rest in my  
letter by Eng. Mail.

I hope this will find  
all as well as when last  
letter was dated and  
want Sally much better.  
Give her ever so much  
love, and the same  
to you all and bid  
you must kiss them  
all round over and over  
for me and they can do  
the same for you. Papa  
will want to come in  
for his share, too.

Good bye until next time  
from Laura

My dear friends in general.  
The weight of the letter is all  
done to all.

I saw on shore yesterday elegant carved ivory, but  
it was all very plain & very basket-like in feeling.  
I looked at dollars worth  
like lace work  
I looked at  
"Salama" ware  
in a Japanese spirit  
I saw, not  
with a view  
to purchasing  
but to gratify  
my curiosity.  
I wish I  
could de-  
scribe all the  
pretty things  
I saw, but I  
can't, so the  
best thing I  
can do is to  
write all the  
Thursday Apr. 17, 9 P.M.  
Henry is in bed, and I am  
very sleepy, but the morning  
is so full of interruptions  
I am afraid I shan't have  
time, tomorrow, before Henry  
goes ashore, to add another  
supplement to my letter, and  
so I will do it tonight.  
I have written to Augusta  
and <sup>Mary</sup> Alice, this evening.  
Last evening, Capt. Eaton  
and Sherman spent with  
us. Yesterday afternoon  
I went ashore for the first  
time, and on our way  
back, went alongside the  
"Paul Revere", but the Capt.  
& his family were ashore,



so I didn't go on board.  
This afternoon, I went ashore  
on the opposite side from  
Hong Kong, (on the main land  
of China) where the naval  
stores are kept; and where  
our coal goes. I went through  
the building, where all the  
torpedoes, electric apparatus,  
and all the latest inventions  
for slaughtering people at  
wholesale are stored.

Henry and Susan went with  
me. It is where our pigs,  
hens, cats and dogs, and  
even our plants have gone  
for their health, and I  
saw them all. They seemed  
very happy and quite well-  
borne.

We have about seven  
or eight hundred tons of  
coal on it; and will probably

finish discharging, a week from  
Saturday. We are still ignorant  
of our destination, but I hope  
you know it, so you will be  
writing to the post; wherever  
it is, in time for us to re-  
ceive letters on arrival.  
Keep on writing after you  
receive this, because you  
never know how long we  
may be detained.

Henry wants me to  
ask you, Fannie, to go to  
Mr. Beck and request  
him to make insurance  
of sixteen hundred dollars  
on his <sup>(Henry's)</sup> freight and effects.  
That is what he generally  
has, but he has had  
nothing the past year.  
Don't waste your  
strength, if you haven't al-  
ready done so, to make a

when the paper comes, the things in  
the (I have abandoned your former mind)  
28-30. And in things, either you  
red, looking the green paper until 7-10  
merino 1st-9-80. 9-10. 9-10. 9-10.  
and myself. The have breakfast  
as in the but - the waterman  
bed, every one in bed, I think  
rag carpet; for Henry bought  
two rolls of straw carpeting  
yesterday, which I think  
will carpet the back  
chambers very prettily, and  
it only cost eleven cents  
a yard. Amen money.

There has been a "Parsee"  
pedlar on board today, and  
he had elegant things,  
and some of them al-  
legant prices, too.

Some of his Dofa yellow  
clothes would almost dazzle  
your eyes. They were eight  
and ten dollars a pair, the  
nicest. All made finished  
with cord & tassels, ready to put  
the pillow inside.

Long Grove. Thursday May 13/88

Dear Sisters,

The U. S. Mail came in last Sunday morning and before noon we had our mail.

I rec'd your long letter, Emma and Adeline's and one from Nellie Rogers. Henry rec'd his charter party and I two letters from Mr. Rogers one from Elsie New York, and the three packages of papers from home.

You can imagine, I suppose what a good time we have after the mail gets in each time.

I had been feeling anxious about the home letters from that mail, because I feared you would not all keep well, through March and April, and it seems



my fears were well grounded.  
You have had a hard  
time of it surely, and I wish  
I knew, today, that you are  
all safely through with it,  
but I can't help feeling a  
little uneasy about it as  
you were so off-<sup>and</sup> on of you well  
remember the letters, when  
the letter was written for me  
to feel quite relieved, and  
it will be so long before the  
next mail. However, I don't  
allow myself to think much  
about it, but I hope you are  
all well now. Henry's first  
remark, when I read<sup>d</sup> him  
the letter was, "I don't know  
but you ought to go home",  
by steam he meant. I told  
them my going now, wouldn't  
relieve the case now,  
as I hoped long before this  
you were all right again,  
but I did feel as if I

ought to have been there. Yet  
if I had followed in the same  
train, I should only have added  
to the misery, so I conclude  
regrets are vain, and I must  
get about it.

I was shocked to hear of  
Capt. Davis' death. What in  
the world will become of that  
family, now? It must be a  
terrible shock to them all.

But it must do for me to break  
(or write) more home affairs now,  
as you will want to know  
how we are getting on and  
my time for writing, this  
time is limited. Henry wants  
to go ashore early, this morning  
and I want this to go by the  
French mail, which leaves at  
noon, hence my haste.

I intended to write last even-  
ing, but I had a tiresome  
afternoon ashore, then called  
the first of the evening (Capt. Ward,

and children) and after that  
I was too tired to write.

He went yesterday to the  
Hospital Survey Sup on the  
hill, to call on Genl. Halder  
man, Minister to Siam. He  
was Consul when we were  
in Bangkok. We saw by the  
paper that he arrived by  
Bangkok Steamer & had gone  
into Hospital here. Henry  
spoke to the Consul here  
about him & sent his regards  
& he <sup>Genl. H.</sup> sent word by Consul he  
would be glad to see us,  
so we went yesterday and  
had a very pleasant call.  
Col. Mundy called too, while  
we were there. Genl. H.  
is broken down in health  
like nearly all who spend  
many years in Bangkok.  
and I should think it  
would be some time before  
he will be able to return.

We rec'd a letter from Dr. Dean last week with a very cordial invitation to go down to Bangor and visit him. He wrote that Miss Hartwell had gone to the States. Genl. H. said she was broken down in health.

Last Sat. I went to a picnic on the mainland. The dinner house & grounds of a rich merchant were at our disposal, fortunately as we <sup>had</sup> heavy thunder showers all the afternoon, but we were well housed & enjoyed it. Thirteen of our subscribers to supper together. Day before yesterday, I spent afternoon & evening on board Capt. Warland's ship. I go ashore most every day. You see I am getting to be a real "gadabout" and it interferes with my letter writing.

I forget to tell you that



Sat. forenoon Henry & I went  
on board the U.S. Frigate  
"Pontre", and were taken  
over the ship by the Captain.  
I wanted to go to church  
Sunday, but Henry had bad  
headache, so I couldn't  
go. I haven't been to church  
since arrival, because sickness  
or rain has prevented any  
time. I don't know now,  
as we shall be here an-  
other Sunday, but I think  
we shan't get away before  
Monday. Henry wants to go  
Saturday.

We got our orders  
yesterday to go to Manila.  
and, this morning the  
paving stones have begun  
to be put in. It took  
all day yesterday to get  
sighters loaded, and  
during last night fire  
came along side. This

morning the engine came  
& now the uproar, from  
which we have been free  
since the coal was dis-  
charged, is renewed and  
we can hardly hear our-  
selves speak. The China  
men seem to keep time to  
their work by jattering in  
very loud tones.

While I think of it I  
must tell you that Mrs.  
Rogers wants me to get  
them a Chinese tea set.

My "good taste & judgment"  
seems to be entirely relied on.

When Henry goes ashore  
this morning, I am going on  
board the "L'Ancre" to see  
Mrs. McIntosh who is quite  
sick. This afternoon I have  
agreed to go to the French  
Convent with Miss Warland.

The China Mail goes  
next Tuesday, and we shall

leave a budget for that.

Tell Sadie I shall write to her by that mail. I do hope she is well, now, and all the rest of you 'too. I believe Aunt Sally endures the bad weather & change better than any of us. Give her our love particularly, and tell her we hope to be home next Dec.

I shall be so glad when we are loaded & headed homeward. We don't know yet whether we go to N.Y. or Boston, but we shall know when our lay days are up.

I have some little pieces of ribbon which I am going to enclose for Sadie's dolls.

Enclosed a bill of exchange in my last letter by Union Mail. I will enclose "Send of exchange by next Union.

I realize this letter is much after the style of "My goose had 8." but if you could realize the

Circumstances, under which  
it has been written you would not  
wonder. Part before breakfast  
& part since, with interruptions  
by Washwoman, Stewards  
and Steward, and nearly  
all the time being asking  
questions about business &  
everything else & latterly  
asking every few minutes  
if I am ready.

I found no trouble  
Emma in reading your letter  
after the directions at the  
head of one of the sheets,  
and I read it all through  
three, then looked it all  
over again, to see if I  
couldn't find anything extra  
item I had missed.

Sadie's little letter  
was very nice & also the  
writing on the paper to  
which she signed her name.  
It is her party time for Papa  
and Mamma. With much love  
to you all from us both. Love















